



## ***ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA CHIEFS SECRETARIAT INC.***

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December 17, 2012

Brian Pallister  
Leader of the Opposition  
Progressive Conservative Party of Manitoba  
Room 227, Legislative Building  
450 Broadway Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB, R3C 0V8

**RE: OPEN LETTER ON BEHALF OF MANITOBA FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP ON RACIST  
COMMENTS MADE BY BRAYDEN MAZURKIEWICH**

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On behalf of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, I am writing to you the elected leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Manitoba to address Brayden Mazurkiewich's misinformed and racist perspective he publically displayed through various social media outlets over these last few days. Recent media attention surrounding this young Manitoban's racialized ignorance of First Nations people is fostering a growing sense of anger and resentment among many people in Manitoba, particularly amongst our First Nation youth.

Many First Nations people in Manitoba have faced racism for their entire lives, whether through overt individual acts of racism or the systemic racism that is firmly entrenched in the institutions developed by our Treaty partner in our ancestral lands. Then there is the structural racism, that bubbles beneath the surface amongst the public at large, hard to detect until someone calls it out – which is exactly what this young man has done and now this racist reaction that he has caused requires immediate treatment.

A real solution cannot be superficial or merely reactionary. It must address the core informative deficiencies of this country's governing bodies and the educational void of its citizens. This government and any political party that wishes to form government must clearly understand that First Nation peoples, by virtue of their prior occupation and nationhood, possessed exclusive rights that survived confederation and are indeed entrenched in the Constitution Act of 1982. Every citizen, resident, and visitor has or assumes the benefits and corresponding obligations resulting from the Treaty agreements that were signed. New citizens ought to be expressly informed of the nature of Canada's and Manitoba's relationship with the Aboriginal peoples that they will accept through naturalization.

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**Brian Pallister, Leader of the Opposition**

**December 18, 2012**

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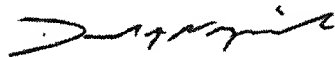
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We now note that following the comments of Mr. Mazurkiewich, the Progressive Conservative youth 'leader' was asked to step down from his leadership role. We see this call to step down as an exercise in political correctness and nothing more. The individual in question continues to engage in racially biased comments that are far too frequent to be accidental. In light of this, I have instructed my staff to cancel a meeting scheduled tomorrow with you and your office. This gesture however is not intended to paint the entirety of the Progressive Conservative Party with one brush but rather to put your party on notice that a full public apology is expected to First Nation citizens of Manitoba. This continued and willful dissemination of falsehoods and ignorance is but one example of a long list of contributing factors that prevents many of us from being good neighbours in this city and this province.

I would be willing to sit down with you and your caucus at a later date to discuss this very serious issue of racism that seems to be alive and well in your political party and find ways in which we can all overcome the misinformation.

In Sovereignty,

**ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA CHIEFS**



Derek J. Nepinak, LLB, B.A.(Hons.)  
Grand Chief, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs